

16 October 2024

Supportive funding for digital networking: Federal Minister Robert Habeck presents funding notification to Rheinmetall

Rheinmetall subsidiary YardStick Robotics, which develops AI-controlled robots for extreme operational environments, and Rheinmetall Waffe Munition GmbH were awarded a supportive funding notification for the “RoX” research project for a total of €1.4 million. At the ‘Scaling Industrial Data Ecosystems’ event in Berlin, Robert Habeck, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Protection, presented the notice to Klaus Kappen, Chief Technology Officer of Rheinmetall AG, and Domenico D’Agostino, Managing Director of YardStick Robotics.

“RoX” is a research project funded by the BMWK with a total volume of €52 million. The share of the project volume for the Rheinmetall companies is €3.5 million. Launched in September 2020 and scheduled to run for 30 months, “RoX” has set itself the goal of developing a digital ecosystem for AI-based robotics with scalable and innovative solutions for practical implementation.

YardStick Robotics relies on an efficient and cost-effective development workflow that is made possible by digital networking and model-based system development, as well as the use of artificial intelligence. This opens up access to customised robots and automation lines, particularly for small and medium-sized companies – for future-oriented and efficient automation in various industries.

Looking into the future, this will open up a wide range of application scenarios for the Rheinmetall Corporation. These will be implemented at the site in Unterlüß as part of RoX, together with Rheinmetall Waffe & Munition and others.

Already in spring of this year, YardStick Robotics was able to acquire a funding sum of €3.2m as part of the Manufacturing-X initiative of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Protection (BMWK) for the Robot-X research project in cooperation with the Rheinmetall entities Pierburg GmbH and Rheinmetall Electronics GmbH.



► Key facts

- Rheinmetall subsidiary YardStick Robotics receives funding for research project in the field of AI/robotics
- The total project volume for “RoX” is €52 million
- Rheinmetall subsidiaries receive funding totaling €1.4 million

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About the project “RoX”

“RoX” is a research project funded by the BMWK that started in September 2024 and will run for 30 months. The goal which has been set by a consortium of leading industry and science partners is to develop a digital ecosystem for AI-based robotics with scalable and innovative solutions for practical implementation.

The project aims at establishing a digital ecosystem that facilitates or even enables the use of innovative AI-based robotic solutions in various practical applications and industries. Manufacturing in particular, as well as the logistics and service sectors, will benefit from the project results.

The use of AI-based robotic systems offers enormous potential for strengthening those industries that depend on the high efficiency and flexibility of robotic systems. In the coming years, the market for robotics will be characterised by significant growth. In order to fully utilise this potential, the “RoX” project will take robotic systems to a new level of performance by combining advanced robotic components, artificial intelligence (AI) and a digital ecosystem. This will shorten innovation cycles and significantly improve system integration and commissioning.

No single market participant can cover or master the high complexity of AI-based robotic systems alone. That is why a consortium of industry and science is cooperating across company boundaries in “RoX”. The focus is on practice-relevant use-cases that address the current need for action in industry and offer innovative, transferable solutions. The central application areas include

- Loading and unloading processes along the entire logistics chain,
- Commissioning processes in unstructured areas,
- Multifunctional and location-flexible robot systems in production and
- AI-based commissioning of robot systems.

In these areas, the feasibility and practicality of the developed solutions are demonstrated and evaluated in terms of their potential for continuous further development and scalability.

In order to develop a scalable digital ecosystem for AI-based robotics, “RoX” focuses on the integration of practice-oriented solutions in development and application environments, the provision of quality-assured software components and AI models, and the design of semantic models and meta-data structures. Data security of the robotics ecosystem and networking with international initiatives are also addressed as an integral part of the project.

The sustainable organisational structure ensures that the developed software modules, semantic models and the digital ecosystem will be provided and further developed beyond the end of the project. In this way, “RoX” will make an important contribution to the future of AI-based robotics and sustainably strengthen the innovative power of the participating industries.